How Civilised were the Romans?

WHAT WERE THE ROMANS REALLY LIKE?
Our Aims

- To understand what the term “civilised” actually means
- To see if the Romans were a civilised people
- To use evidence that will help us make a final judgement
Starter Task

- What does being civilised mean?
- In pairs you need to find 5 ways (if you can!) that you think show what being civilised means.
- You have 3 minutes.
- Ask for help if you need it!
Step 2: Were Romans civilised?

- How many students say yes?
- How many students say no?
- How many aren’t sure?
Step 3: How do we find out more?

- Each of the worksheets you will be given contains a number of visual and written sources.
- We will look at each one and decide whether or not they show if Romans are civilised or not.
- Once we have the way of working understood you will carry on with this review.
- You will also need a copy of the review table to complete this task!
Source A: From 97 AD

- Written by a Roman Official

- “My job is about the health of Rome. This task has always been handled by the most important men in Rome. Nine Aqueducts bring water into the city. We put special filter tanks at the start of each aqueduct to clean the water before it is sent to Rome.”
Source B: from 97AD

- Written by a Greek Visitor called Strabo in 97 AD

- Water is brought into the city in such quantities that it is like a river flowing through the city. Every house has water pipes, fountains and toilets
Everywhere the Romans went, even in army camps, they always built bath houses.

- How many rooms do they have?
- How are they used?
Source D: Is this fair?

- How the water supply is shared out in Rome
  - 38% to houses and businesses
  - 25% to official buildings
  - 17% to the Emperor
  - 13% to public cisterns and fountains
  - 4% to amphitheatres, baths and theatres
  - 3% to military barracks
Written by Cicero in 97 AD

“What pleasure can a man of culture find when either a weak human being is mangled by a powerful beast, or a splendid animal is transfixed with a horrible hunting spear?”
Written by the historian Seneca

“I arrived at the Colosseum in the middle of the day. A mass execution was taking place (this was the lunchtime entertainment). This was while the crowd waited for the gladiators. No sooner has a man killed his rival than the crowd shout for him to kill another, or be killed. In the end every fighter dies. And all this with the half the seats still empty.

You may say the victims are murderers and thieves, but even if they deserve to suffer, why watch their sufferings?
Source G: Gladiators in the Colosseum

► The Colosseum held up to 70,000 spectators

► Gladiators were an entertainment in all Roman towns

► One aspect of Gladiatorial combat still survives today: can anyone tell me where and what this is?

► (Clue: Toro, Matador)
Source H: A description of a Gladiator

Written by Juvenal

“He wasn’t exactly young and he had a dud arm. Besides his face was a proper mess, helmet scarred, a great wart on his nose, an unpleasant discharge always trickling from one eye. But he was a gladiator!”
Step 4: Were the Romans civilised?

- Now that we have looked at all the sources we need to answer this question.
- To do this you need to look at all the evidence we have seen and make a judgement (a final decision).
- To do this you need a writing frame, your work so far and your brain!
Writing Frame: Were Romans Civilised?

- Start your answer like this......
- I think the Romans were civilised in some ways because........
- I think that Romans could also be uncivilised because...........
- Then finish your answer by adding your final decision or conclusion
- On balance I think the Romans were......
- (Civilised, not civilised, both......)